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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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H. P. Blavatsky

August 11, 1831 — May 8, 1891

WE base our devotion and our efforts upon the nature of Those who gave the Message of Theosophy, and accept as safe, good, true and what is necessary, the lines that are to be found laid down in Their writings. Those who think that way will work that way. There is a solid basis for united effort in this position; any other position can but lead to differences, to assumptions, to authorities. It is UNITY *that the Movement needs among all who are attracted by the Message; that which will best bring it about is the true way, no matter what anyone says. Neither Jesus nor H.P.B. lived and died that a book or books should be swallowed wholesale, nor even that men should become disciples, but that all men should become brothers.*—R.C.

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AUM

Of teachers there are many; the MASTER-SOUL is one, Alaya, the Universal Soul. Live in that MASTER as ITS ray in thee. Live in thy fellows as they live in IT.
—*The Voice of the Silence*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXXVII **May, 1949** **No. 7**

THE DIAMOND HEART

H P. BLAVATSKY, the teacher of Theosophy, was considered by many in her life-time to be an extraordinary personage. What scholars took to be an immense and profound learning, what social reformers saw as the crusader's zeal, what mystics looked upon as "magical" powers—all combined to render the high-born Russian lady an arresting figure in the intellectual world of her day. At the same time, the "blessings of publicity" created a still more fantastic picture in the popular mind—an image compounded of fact and fancy, first-hand evidence mixed with gossip, slander, and superstition.

But quite another image may be called up by the name, "H.P. Blavatsky." One who has studied her writings, puzzling over the metaphysics of man, rejoicing in the vistas of evolution opened before the human soul, driving thought to a higher plane where principles are self-evident and truths have a life of their own—a theosophist, in short, with any hard-won realization of the import of the philosophy she brought, has a picture of H. P. Blavatsky so different from the popular conception that almost no comparison is possible.

Yet the fact that H. P. Blavatsky was and is misrepresented, misunderstood and maligned by some, and extravagantly conceived by others, is not to be ignored, especially not by the student of Theosophy. The life of Mme. Blavatsky was part of her teaching, although she made no claim to be an exemplifier of theosophical

ideas. It is well for the student to consider Theosophy apart from any personality, but it becomes virtually impossible to *continue* in Theosophy without gaining some insight into human nature, and especially into the nature of H.P.B., the teacher.

Once the mind is turned from purely intellectual or theoretical study and engages itself with the deeper study which *seeks and applies principles,* human life will appear as a tremendous laboratory designed to demonstrate metaphysics, and the student will begin to be aware, as never before, that some human beings—and all men some of the time—manifest a control of "human nature" quite beyond the usual expectations. Since the mind cannot see evidences of a law it does not understand, the examples of transcendent ethics, the ingredients of what may be termed a "spiritual life," are not uniformly visible to all men. But let the mind take on a new and higher principle of action, and the man will discern, where before he saw nothing, evidence after evidence of other men who knew and applied the same principle. Different as the individual applications are, they can always be identified by one who himself understands the principle and acknowledges his obligation to practice it.

The Third Fundamental Proposition of Mme. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine,* once its import is grasped, will prompt a man to assume his own responsibility for evolution and to proceed, whatever his karma, with self-reliance and philosophical initiative. This position assumed illumines the paradox of soul and Oversoul, of independence and brotherhood, of self-induced exertions and the "cycle of necessity." It becomes clear that if one individual will, allied even with the utmost knowledge, could alter by independent action the character or capacity of any other being in the universe—then would the justice of evolution be set at naught. If any man in any age could receive the slightest moral perception, or admit the meanest fact, against his will or in spite of himself, then must Self-Knowledge be a meaningless goal. The integrity of mind and soul in man depends upon the self-energized pursuit of knowledge, and all help from teachers or companions is in the exact measure of one's will and effort in the search for truth.

Thus the best index to the work of a Teacher is the one among his pupils who had the most steadfast will to help and teach others

—for that one calls forth the teacher's mightiest work, gives scope for the teacher's most cherished aims and highest powers. The "favorite disciple" affords the most reliable testimony to his master's mission, because in such a relationship exists no distance between motives, no difference in aim, no barrier to communion. The motive, aim, and communication of a Teacher may be worthy or unworthy in the world's sight, but it would never be visible at all unless at least one man had joined hand and heart with that Being in order to bring forth a gift to mankind.

William Q. Judge, whatever his own status may have been, was at least one among her colleagues whose selflessness and devotion earned him a deep intuition of H. P. Blavatsky's status, and he credited her with "the power and the knowledge that belong but to lions and sages." Summing up sixteen years of work in their common Cause—and suggesting that she was one he "must have known in lives long passed away"—Mr. Judge wrote:

> She looked at me in recognition at that first hour, and never since has that look changed. . . . So, friends from the first, I felt safe. Others I know have looked with suspicion on an appearance they could not fathom, and though it is true they adduce proofs which, hugged to the breast, would damn sages and gods, yet it is only through blindness they failed to see the lion's glance, the diamond heart of H.P.B.

H. P. Blavatsky was scholar, reformer and mystic, as scholars, reformers and mystics thought her to be, but she was none of these in the usual sense. Relatively little is known about the first forty years of Mme. Blavatsky's life, but this is as it should be, perhaps, for the most complete biographical details would stop far short of explaining the real mystery—the mind and heart of H.P.B. If the philosophy she taught is true, then the real qualities of that Being itself were brought over from former lives of training in the same lines of work, that of devotion to the Cause of Theosophy. The task of "H.P.B." was to discipline the new body and brain and assimilate them to the knowledge of the inner Ego. Despite all the emphasis H.P.B. attached to her Teachers and *Their* knowledge, it is almost necessary to take the view that the knowledge she transmitted in her writings was also hers, checked and verified by personal study and application.

This view is of great value in interpreting H. P. Blavatsky's activities before 1875, and with this hypothesis the meagre facts of her "biography" are all-sufficing hints. To what end the twenty or more years devoted to arduous travel, except that the future writer of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* might have direct testimony to offer in respect to ancient and modern traditions of occult truth? H. P. Blavatsky travelled the mysterious East and the no less mysterious ancient America, contacting—it may justly be assumed—"witnesses on the scene," often solitary scholars in whose minds the ancient learning still reverberated, even as the majestic ruins of former civilizations returned some echo of the glory that had been. Comparative religion for Mme. Blavatsky was an absorbing experience with veritable "original sources."

And what of the crusading spirit that won the editor of *The Theosophist* in India and *Lucifer* in London high tributes from other fiery warriors for liberty of conscience? What did the author of *The Key to Theosophy* draw upon in composing that treatise on practical philosophy? What, indeed, when this was a woman who bore battle scars of her own, honorably won by *philosophical* exposure of the injustice of imperialism and the crime of race prejudice? A fearless uncompromiser, H. P. Blavatsky took her stand on the principle of Universal Brotherhood and flinched not at universal application of the doctrine. She refused, however, to meddle in politics, preferring to deal directly with the inhumanities of man at their source in attitudes of mind and in false philosophies, religions, and sciences. Thus she portrayed the "karmic visions" of a great soldier burning with a desire to atone for his policy of war and vengefulness, and longing to bring mankind into the glorious future when neither war nor the rumors of war will be known. Or, with equal force and the conviction of experience, H. P. Blavatsky would write of the futility of social reform at the physical level. One of her last acts was to preside at the opening of a theosophical club for working-girls—a symbol of her persistent effort to deal with *minds* and thus show the way to permanent reformation.

The psychological powers which captured the attention of spiritualists, psychics and mystics represent another area of intense concentration, another subject of original research. The sure touch of the hand that penned "Psychic and Noëtic Action," and many other

penetrating analyses of the psychic, intellectual and moral consciousness in man, was not developed by chance. It is not too much to imagine that H. P. Blavatsky had given long years, even decades, to rigorous self-study and to a tireless extension of self-control over one faculty after another, as the various hidden powers in man came into play in her own nature. As a child, Helena Petrovna was observed to manifest strange ways of thought and perception; in later years came perceptions even more remote from the ordinary mind, and thoughts stranger still entered her contemplation. Then the psychic phenomena of the earlier period ceased by her own *will,* though few caught the significance of this power to control psychic "happenings." Apparently, not many were conscious that to the end of her days, for those who were prepared to investigate the occult powers in man, H. P. Blavatsky was a living demonstration of potentialities in the human soul that are still undreamed of by modern psychologists. The heart of her who rendered the Book of the Golden Precepts for disciples in the school of self-knowledge will not be easily fathomed, but *The Voice of the Silence* emanating from that "dark forest" is some intimation of the Path she followed, if not of the Place she had attained.

Theosophical study of the life and work of H. P. Blavatsky shows that the Three Objects of the Theosophical Movement were not assembled for the occasion, in 1875, when they were announced by her to the world. Rather, those Objects—Brotherhood among men, Brotherhood in ideas and ideals, and Brotherhood as the motive for acquiring knowledge and power—represent an unchanging line of teaching and the unvarying practice of such a being as H.P.B.

It is significant that while others were describing their *departed* teacher, William Q. Judge spoke of feeling "ever near and potent the magic of that resistless power, as of a mighty rushing river, which those who trusted her always came to understand." This perception is open to all theosophists, for the magic, the power, and the mighty river—what else can they be but the wondrous current of Theosophy itself? The student of H. P. Blavatsky need see no unsolvable mystery in the nature of his Teacher, but he cannot know the "diamond heart" until he knows Theosophy as She knew it—as the heart of each one's higher life.

H. P. BLAVATSKY ON PRECIPITATION

And Other Matters

[Only a few examples exist of H. P. Blavatsky's direct discourse to individuals—a form of address which draws the reader into synchronous vibration, so to speak, with the *life* of H.P.B. Some excerpts from her letters, mostly from those to Wm. Q. Judge, were read on the first anniversary of her death, May 8, 1892 ("She Being Dead, Yet Speaketh," Theosophy xxxi, 291); a number of her references to Mr. Judge and the T.S. are assembled (*Letters That Have Helped Me,* pp. 276-283); "Why I Do Not Return to India" (Theosophy xxxv, 292) discusses frankly and at length the conditions under which H.P.B. found it impossible to teach; and the *Five Messages to American Theosophists* reveal a whole inner world of work for Theosophy. The present article —evidently a letter of H.P.B.'s to Wm. Q. Judge—was not published by him until almost two years after her passing. Then, while fresh confusion and new accusations of fraud were circulating with respect to Mr. Judge (H.P.B. being no longer present as the "lightning conductor" for the Society), he published her letter, as impersonally as possible, in *The Path* for March, 1893. No better proof is needed of the sacrifice exacted of a Teacher than this revelation of H.P.B.'s. Those who value the teaching have here an inkling of the debt still to be paid to the Messenger of 1875.—Eds. Theosophy.]

THE following is the greater part of a letter written by H.P. Blavatsky some years ago at a time when, subsequent to the Psychical Research Society's Report on Theosophical phenomena, not only the public but fellow members of the Society were doubting her, doubting themselves, doubting the Adepts. Its publication now will throw upon her character a light not otherwise obtainable. Written to an intimate and old friend for his information and benefit, it bears all the indicia of being out of the heart from one old friend to another. Those who have faith in her and in the Masters behind her will gain benefit and knowledge from its perusal.

Now what you advise me to do, I have for the last three or four years attempted most seriously. Dozens of times I have declared

that *I shall not* put the Masters any worldly questions or submit before Them family and other private matters, personal for the most part. I must have sent back to the writers dozens and dozens of letters addressed to the Masters, and many a time have I declared I will not ask Them so and so. Well, what was the consequence? People still worried me. "Please, do please, ask the Masters, only ask and tell Them and draw Their attention to" so-and-so. When I refused doing it _____ would come up and bother, or _____, or someone else. Now it so happens that you do not seem to be aware of the occult law—to which even the Masters are subject Themselves—whenever an *intense desire* is concentrated on Their personalities: whenever the appeal comes from a man of even an average good morality, and all the desire is intense and sincere even in matters of trifles (and to *Them* what is *not* a trifle?): They are disturbed by it, and the desire takes a material form and would haunt Them (the word is ridiculous, but I know of no other) if They did not create an impassable barrier, an Akasic wall between that desire (or thought, or prayer) and so isolate Themselves. The result of this extreme measure is that They find Themselves isolated at the same time from all those who willingly or unwillingly, consciously or otherwise, are made to come within the circle of that thought or desire. I do not know whether you will understand me; I hope you will. And finding Themselves cut off from *me,* for instance, many were the mistakes made and dangers *realized* that could have been averted had They not often found Themselves *outside* the circle of theosophical events. Such is the case ever since _____, throwing Their names right and left, *poured in torrents* on the public, so to say, Their personalities, powers, and so on, until the world (the outsiders, not only Theosophists) *desecrated* Their names indeed from the North to the South Pole. Has not the Maha Chohan put His foot on that from the first? Has He not forbidden Mahatma K.H. to write to anyone? (Mr. _____ knows well all this.) And have not since then *waves* of supplications, torrents of desires and prayers poured unto Them? This is one of the *chief* reasons *why* Their names and personalities ought to have been kept *secret* and inviolable. They were desecrated in every possible way by believer and unbeliever, by the former when he would *critically* and from *his* worldly standpoint examine

Them (the Beings beyond and outside every worldly if not human law!), and when the latter positively slandered, dirted, dragged Their names in the mud! O powers of heaven! what *I* have suffered —there are no words to express it. This is my chief, my greatest crime, for having brought Their personalities to public notice unwillingly, reluctantly, and forced into it by _____ and _____.

Well, now to other things. You and the Theosophists have come to the conclusion that in every case where a message was found couched in words or sentiments *unworthy* of Mahatmas it was produced either by *elementals* or *my own falsification.* Believing the latter, no honest man or woman ought for one moment to permit *me, such a* FRAUD, to remain any longer in the Society. It is not a piece of repentance and a promise that I shall do so no longer that you need, but to *kick me out*—if you really think so. You believe, you say, in the Masters, and at the same time you can credit the idea that *They* should permit or even know of it and still *use me!* Why, if They are the exalted Beings you rightly suppose Them to be, how could They permit or tolerate for one moment such a deception and fraud? Ah, poor Theosophists—little *you do* know the occult laws, I see. And here _____ and others *are* right. Before you volunteer to serve Masters you should *learn Their philosophy,* for otherwise you shall always sin grievously, though unconsciously and involuntarily, against Them and those who serve Them, *soul and body and spirit.* Do you suppose for one moment that what you write to me now I did not know for years? Do you think that any person even endowed with simple sagacity, let alone occult powers, could ever fail to perceive each time *suspicion* when there was one, especially when it generated in the minds of honest, sincere people, unaccustomed to and incapable of hypocrisy? It is just that which killed me, which tortured and broke my heart inch by inch for years, for I had to bear it *in silence* and had no right to explain things unless permitted by Masters, and *They commanded me to remain silent.* To find myself day after day facing those I loved and respected best between the two horns of the dilemma—either to appear cruel, selfish, unfeeling by refusing to satisfy their hearts' desire, or, by consenting to it, to run the chance (9 out of 10) that they shall immediately feel suspicions lurking in their minds, for the Master's answers and notes ("the red and blue spook-like

messages," as _____ truly calls them) were *sure* in their eyes—again 9 times out of 10—to be of that spook character. Why? Was it *fraud? Certainly not.* Was it written by and produced by elementals? NEVER. It was delivered and the *physical* phenomena are produced by elementals used for the purpose, but what have they, those *senseless* beings, to do with the intelligent portions of the smallest and most foolish message? Simply this, as *this morning before the receipt of your letter,* at 6 o'clock, I was permitted and told by Master to make you understand at least—you—and all the sincere, truly devoted Theosophists: *as you sow, so will you reap. . . .*

It is ALL YOU Theosophists, who have dragged down in your minds the ideals of our MASTERS, you who have unconsciously and with the best of intentions and full sincerity of good purpose DESECRATED Them by thinking for one moment and believing that THEY would trouble Themselves with your business matters, sons to be born, daughters to be married, houses to be built, etc., etc. And yet, all those who have received such communications being nearly *all* sincere (those who were *not* have been dealt with according to other special laws), you had a *right,* knowing of the existence of Beings who you thought could easily help you, to seek help from Them, to address Them, once that a monotheist addresses his *personal* God, desecrating the GREAT UNKNOWN a million of times *above* the Masters—by asking Him (or IT) to help him with a good crop, to slay his enemy, and send him a son or daughter; and having such a right in the absolute sense, They could not spurn you off and refuse answering you, if not Themselves, then by ordering a Chela to satisfy the addresses to the best of his or hers [the Chela's] ability. How many a time was I—no Mahatma—shocked and startled, burning with shame when shown notes from Chelas exhibiting mistakes in science, grammar, and thoughts expressed in such language that it perverted entirely the meaning originally intended, and having sometimes expressions that in Thibetan, Sanscrit, or any other Asiatic language had quite a different sense. As in one instance I will give.

In answer to Mr. _____'s letter referring to some apparent contradiction in *His.* The Chela who was made to precipitate Mahatma K.H.'s reply put, "I had to exercise all my *ingenuity* to reconcile the two things." Now the term "ingenuity" used for and mean-

ing candor, fairness, an absolute word in this sense and never used now, but one meaning this perfectly, as I even find in Webster, was misconstrued by Massey, Hume, and I believe even _____ to mean "cunning," "cleverness," "acuteness" to form a new combination so as to prove there was no contradiction. Hence: the Mahatma was made apparently to confess most unblushingly to ingenuity, to using *craft* to reconcile things like an acute "tricky lawyer," etc., etc. Now had *I* been commissioned to write or precipitate the letter I would have translated the Master's thought by using the word "ingenuousness," "openness of heart, frankness, fairness, freedom from reserve and dissimulation," as Webster gives it, and opprobrium thrown on Mahatma K.H.'s character would have been avoided. It is not *I* who would have used *"carbolic acid"* instead of *"carbonic* acid," etc. It is very rarely that Mahatma K.H. *dictated verbatim,* and when He did there remained the few sublime passages found in Mr. Sinnett's letters from Him. The rest—he would say—write so-and-so, and the Chela wrote often without knowing a word of English, as I am now made to write Hebrew and Greek and Latin, etc. Therefore the only thing I can be reproached with—a reproach I am ever ready to bear tho' I have not *deserved* it, having been simply the obedient and blind tool of our occult laws and regulations—*is* of having concealed that which the laws and regulations of my pledges did not permit me so far to reveal. I owned myself several times mistaken in policy, and now am punished for it with daily and hourly crucifixion.

Pick up stones, Theosophists; pick them up, brothers and kind sisters, and stone me to death with them for such mistakes.

Two or three times, perhaps more, letters were precipitated *in my presence* by a Chela who could not speak English and who took ideas and expressions out of my head. The phenomena in *truth* and *solemn reality* were greater at those times than ever. Yet they often appeared the most suspicious, and *I had to hold my tongue,* to see suspicion creeping into the minds of those I loved best and respected, unable to justify myself or say one word! What I suffered *Master alone knew.* Think only (a case with Solovioff's at _____) I sick in my bed: a letter of his, *an old letter,* received in London and torn up by me, *rematerialized* in my own sight, I looking at the thing. Five or six lines in the *Russian language* in Mahatma *K.H.'s hand-*

writing in blue, the words *taken from my head,* the letter old and crumpled travelling slowly *alone* (even I could not see the astral hand of the Chela performing the operation) across the bedroom, then slipping into and among Solovioff's papers—he was writing in the little drawing-room correcting my manuscript, Olcott standing closely by him and having just handled the papers, looking over them with Solovioff, the latter [finds] it, and like a flash I see in his head *in Russian* the thought "The old imposter (meaning Olcott) must have put it there"!—and such things by hundreds.

Well—this will do. I have told you the truth, the whole truth, and *nothing but the truth,* so far as I am allowed to give it. Many are the things I have *no* right to explain if I *had to be hung for it.* Now think for one moment. Suppose _____ receives an order from his Master to precipitate a letter to the _____ family, only a general idea being given to him about what he has to write. Paper and envelope are *materialized* before him, and he has only to form and shape the ideas into *his* English and precipitate them. What shall the result be? Why *his* English, his ethics and philosophy—his style all round. "A *fraud,* a *transparent* FRAUD!" people would cry out, and if any one happened to *see such a paper before him* or in his possession *after it was formed,* what should be the consequences?

Another instance—I cannot help it, it is so suggestive. A man, *now dead,* implored me for three days to ask Master's advice on some business matter, for he was going to become bankrupt and dishonor his family. A *serious* thing. He gave me a letter for Master "to send on." I went into the back parlor and he went down stairs to wait for the answer.

Now to *send on* a letter two or three processes are used: (1) To put the envelope sealed on my forehead, and then, warning the Master to be ready for a communication, have the contents reflected by my brain carried off to His perception by the *current formed* by Him. This, if the letter is in a language I know; otherwise, if in an unknown tongue, (2) to unseal it, read it *physically* with my eyes, without understanding even the words, and *that which my eyes see* is carried off to Master's perception and reflected in it in His *own* language, after which, to be sure no mistake is made, I have to burn the letter with a stone I have (matches and common

fire would never do), and the ashes caught by the current become more minute than atoms would be, and are *rematerialized* at any distance where Master was.

Well, I put the letter on the forehead *opened,* for it was in a language of which I know not one word, and when Master had seized its contents I was ordered to burn and send it on. It so happened that I had to go in my bed-room and get the stone there from a drawer it was locked in. That minute I was away, the addresser, impatient and anxious, had silently approached the door, entered the drawing-room, not seeing me there, and seen his own letter opened on the table. He was *horror-struck,* he told me later, *disgusted,* ready to commit suicide, for he was a bankrupt not only in fortune, but all his *hopes,* his *faith,* his heart's creed were crushed and gone. I returned, burnt the letter, and an hour after gave him the answer, also in his language. He read it with dull staring eyes, but thinking, as he told me, that if there were no Masters *I was* a Mahatma, did what he was told, and his fortune and honor were saved. Three days later he came to me and frankly told me all—did not conceal his doubts for the sake of *gratitude,* as others did—and was rewarded. By order of the Master I showed him *how* it was done and he understood it. Now had he not told me, and had his business gone wrong, *advice* notwithstanding, would not he have died believing me the *greatest imposter* on earth?

So it goes.

It is my *heart's desire to be rid forever* of any phenomena but my own mental and personal communication with Masters. I shall no more have anything to do whatever with letters or phenomenal occurrences. This I swear on Master's Holy Names, and may write a circular letter to that effect.

Please read the present to all, even to _____. FINIS all, and now Theosophists who will come and ask me to tell them so and so *from Masters, may the Karma fall on their* heads. I AM FREE. Master has *just promised me this blessing!!*

H.P.B.

THE HINDU CALENDAR

THE Westerner, observing daily life in India, may be perplexed by the apparently indiscriminate mixing of politics and agriculture with religion and philosophy, and the tendency to base all activities on astronomy or astrology. If it is difficult to understand and to draw a line between these fields of learning, the reason is that there is no such line, therefore it cannot be drawn—not in India, at any rate. To appreciate the synthesis which Indian daily life is—a synthesis of philosophy, religion, politics, science and agriculture—not forgetting the ever-recurrent basis of the movement of the Sun and Moon and planets among the stars, is to take a very important step toward solving the problem of India's long political subjugation to the rule of foreign invaders. Since India is so essentially a country of innumerable little villages and since her population is primarily interested in the cultivation of the soil, one who would understand the country as a whole, must study the life of the village.

Indian life is based on tradition—tradition which has its taproot in a knowledge long since passed beyond the ken of the average man and woman, but a tradition zealously guarded and kept alive because embodied in the daily religious observances of the most illiterate. The growth of *agricultural* knowledge in India is empirical rather than strictly scientific. It affords many examples from which the West can learn (and in some cases has learnt, as witness the volume, *Man, Moon and Plant,* by H. H. Staddon). It may at first seem superstition, it may appear to be dictated by religious ignorance, but for untold ages a scientific religion and a religious science has been the guide; its traditional practice is often naïvely followed. "What did my father and my father's father do? How was this or that undertaken in the days of the *Mahabharata?*" If one could answer these questions, he was content and happy to follow. But in the West, hardly a year passes but systems change, knowledge advances, and theories and practices insisted on at the time of planting are already obsolete before the time of the crop's harvesting!

NOTE.—This article is mainly taken from a letter written several years ago by an Indian scholar to a Western friend living in India.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

The Westerner may desire, for example, to have a short and simple picture of the Indian calendar which, he finds, plays so important a role in the lives of the people. But the more one studies the intricacies of the problem, the more engrossed he becomes, for the task is far more formidable than it appears, and the student may have to resort to such highly technical volumes as *Indian and Foreign Chronology,* by V. B. Kethkar *(Royal Asiatic Society Journal),* and to Pillai's *An Indian Ephemeria,* whose calculation tables enable us at a glance to place Sun, Moon, Planets, Stars, and all the resulting celestial phenomena for thousands of years both in the past and in the future, showing the vastness of the knowledge possessed by Ancient Astronomers.

The intricacies of the subject can be sampled by those who have access to H. P. Blavatsky's magazine, *The Theosophist,* in a series running from August, 1881, to February, 1882, under the title (previously used by H.P.B. herself) of "Antiquity of the Vedas." The writer, Krishna Shastri Godbole, was evidently a scholar of distinction in the fields of ancient Indian language, mathematics, and astronomy, and for those who can follow the astronomical calculations he gives the evidence for his assertions that the *Bhagavad-Gita* must be dated at least 20,000 years B.C.; that the composition of the Vedas cannot be more recent than 30,000 B.C.; and that the months of the Hindu calendar were originally named in 46,000 B.C., or a few thousand years earlier!

It may be of interest to take a few notes from Godbole's enumeration of the months as first named, showing how the names are appropriate to the seasonal activity. The year began with the spring season, the vernal equinox (one of Krishna's "divine perfections" in the tenth chapter of the *Gita*), which was the "flowering season," when the trees have nectared flowers. Each season has two months, and in the summer the first has the root meaning, *to grieve,* because "people suffer from the excessive heat," while the second means *to purify, to be wet,* for then "early showers remove the dust from trees, and the earth is moistened by occasional rainfall." Next are the two months of the *rain* or *cloud* season, followed by the harvest season with months named after the words signifying *to go* or *to wish*—"the first month of the harvest season in which people go out to their fields to collect corn or for long journeys"—and, second,

to be strong, to strengthen, because in the second month of harvest "strength is derived by the use of new food." The months of Winter celebrated in their names the *ability to resist or oppose cold or clouds,* for in that season "all the animals have power to bear cold, and the sun is clear from clouds." Finally, comes the thawing season, when "the heat of the sun is sufficient to melt the snow previously accumulated," and these months have names meaning *to warm, to heat.*

A brief excursion into the details of the Hindu system of reckoning the days and the years will provide another illustration of the complexity of the subject, and will help to explain why the doctrine of cycles is, as Wm. Q. Judge remarked, "the least known and of all the one most infrequently referred to" in theosophical philosophy, although it is "one of the most important in the whole theosophical system."

The basis of Hindu calendar calculation is Vedic. This calendar has been modified and elaborated, but because it is based on the stars (nakshatras) visible to the naked eye, and on the visible Lunar phases, it is more accurate than any others of the past. The actual moments when Lunar months begin can easily be checked by the regular appearances of Solar eclipses, and the middle moment of a Lunar month—Purnima or full moon—can similarly be verified by the more frequent Lunar eclipses. Hence the Hindu calendar, not requiring special instruments for its rectification, has maintained great accuracy for thousands of years.

The oldest Aryan calendar is probably the Vedic; at first lunar, later with solar elements added to it. The sister Avesta calendar is similarly first Lunar, but later only Solar. Both these calendars (the oldest in the Aryan Race) are influenced by the prehistoric calendars of the first and second root races at the North Pole and its surroundings, as they reckon with days and nights lasting six months. (The Inca Zodiac, the Dendra Egyptian Zodiac, and the Chinese lunar mansions are possibly Atlantean or Atlanto-Aryan; though much has been added to both the Egyptian and the Chinese systems which is purely Aryan and post Vedic.)

For untold ages, the Hindus have observed the motion of the moon, the sun and the seven planets along a definite path that circles our sky and is marked by fixed clusters of stars. The moon

afforded the simplest example. These early astronomers observed that the moon, moving among these fixed star constellations which they called *nakshatras,* returned to the same *nakshatra* in 27.32166 days, thus completing one *nakshatra month.* They found it convenient to divide these groups of stars into 27 almost equal sections, or the 27 nakshatras. By this method of reckoning, instead of giving the date of a month, as Western calendars do, the Hindus gave the name of the *nakshatra* in which the moon was to be seen. (The moon is in each of these nakshatras for approximately one day plus eighteen minutes.)

This scheme fitted nicely with the sun's cycle, for the Hindus noted that the sun traversed the same circle through the sky, but that it returned to its starting place only after 365.258756481 days, or what we call a Solar Sidereal Year. (Modern figures based on this Hindu figure quote 365.2596296 days—a distinction without a difference, for ordinary purposes.) Now, having already divided the month into the 27 nakshatras for the convenience of reckoning the moon's voyage through the heavens, what more natural than that these same nakshatras should serve for the study of the Sun's course? Being in a circle of 360 degrees, each nakshatra takes up 13 1/3 degrees of that circle. The Sun, moving about 1 degree in a day, is seen for 13 1/3 days in each nakshatra. The system of reckoning according to the moon nakshatras is current today, that of the sun's being uncommon.

At present, the nakshatra reckoning, both Solar and Lunar, is begun from ASVINI, which is also the beginning of the first Zodiacal *Rasi* or sign *Mesha.* (Aswins, according to the *Theosophical Glossary,* are twin deities, "the *Kumara-Egos,* the reincarnating 'Principles' in this Manvantara.") This method obtains only at present, because, due to the precession of the equinoxes, not only will the English date change (after 1975) for the starting of the first Solar nakshatra, but in the course of a longer time, the sun's entry on any particular nakshatra will regress and occur during all the four seasons of the year. The *Maitriopanishad* (6.14) shows how, since the writing of that record, this regress has been taking place.

In brief, then, the earliest method, the Vedic, of counting, was to name the moon through the various nakshatras—the circle or cycle repeating itself each Sidereal-Star-Month. Later the sun's

place in the same nakshatras was noted, the year ending when the Sun returned to the same nakshatra. Then came the noting of the Solar and Lunar eclipses, and the observance of the New and Full Moons divided the month into the two phases of waxing and waning Moon, the month beginning at the moment of New Moon. This is how the Hindus reckon today, the month taking its name from the nakshatra in which the Full Moon is seen each month. The Full Moon being exactly opposite the Sun, the Solar nakshatra bears the same name as the Lunar month six months ahead, while each Lunar month bears the same name as the 14th Solar nakshatra ahead.

The Western student faced with these unfamiliar calculations may echo the old Persian proverb, "Why count big numbers and small fractions, when they are all amassed in 1?" But the Hindu looks on these figures from another point of view—he lives with them, and among them, and by them, much of the time. Consider a Sanscrit sloka (verse) about the *Savati* or pearl nakshatra, which marks the new season after the monsoon is over. The sloka says, "If in the *Swati* a rain drop falls into the sea, that drop becomes a pearl." This may sound foolish, for the peasant, though he live in the depth of the interior of India, knows that pearls come from the sea—even if he does not necessarily understand that these pearls grow inside the oyster. He does know, however, that if it rains at this period of the year, his crops will yield great wealth. And the pearl is synonymous with wealth among people who, if they have any money, invest it in jewelry, especially gold and pearls, rather than in the banks. (Poetically, rice, their staple food, is referred to as pearls.) Thus another apparently meaningless sloka which stumps the dry and intellectually bound translators, is found to contain "pearls of wisdom"!

Folk-lore, too, preserves many a teaching which the passing generations of peasants, lost in their faraway villages and farms, would forget—and which their city-bred and college-educated sons deride as idle fairy tales—teachings which are essential to their daily and seasonal life. The peasant knows in which nakshatra he should plant his seed. He knows, too, what work should be done during each of the succeeding and preceding nakshatras. His whole farm life is planned on this astronomically exact calendar. New fields

are opened on what are called "auspicious days"; reaping, sowing, harvesting, threshing—all are regulated according to this calendar of "superstition." Yet an American agriculturist might come to India, gather all this knowledge, and then, putting it to the test, discover, perhaps, its *raison d'etre* for himself. There are also notes that show how the flowering and fruitage of certain trees depict periods of dry and excessive rains. For example, the Tamarind fruits in March-April: when the Tamarind trees yield bumper crops, mango growers in that district know that their trees will bear but ill that year. Again, those who live in a country so often burnt by drought and where the deciding factor of where a man will start his farm will depend on his water supply, have learnt that if they dig near a wild fig tree, they shall find water: their "authority" is Varaha Mihira's *Brihad-Samhita.*

From even a glimpse of the wealth of wisdom embodied in the Hindu "calendar," who can wonder that those who live thus close to Nature—interstellar and Cosmic as well as terrestrial—are worshippers of the Sun and the Stars? For the true "child of the soil," every passing phase of life presents a moment inspiring worship: he adores moments of the rising and the setting Sun; pays homage to, *by using,* the changing periods of the Moon; worships in love, not in fear, the powers and forces of Nature (personified only that they may be the better imagined), and sees in all manifested form but *vahans* or vehicles of Deity. This is not ignorance, nor superstition. "Worship," writes Carlyle, "is transcendent wonder." It is seeing the Spirit that animates the seeming inanimate; it is discerning the beauty and the loveliness in all things. The "nature-worshipper" does not adore the Sun as the Sun; he does not pay homage to the Moon as the Moon; the planets, the stars, the winds and the monsoon rains—these are other than their mortal own: "Not for the love of the loka (worlds) are the loka dear, but for the sake of the SELF are the loka dear. Not for the love of the gods are the gods dear, but for the sake of the SELF are the gods dear. Not for the love of all is all dear, but for the sake of the SELF is all dear. It is the SELF, the *Atman* that should be seen, and harkened to, that should be thought on and pondered on." So sang the ancient poets who saw beauty in all that inspired love.

YEATS—THE WANDERER

MORE than a generation ago, readers who inclined to mysticism and who enjoyed best what they could not understand, found a poet and playwright to their taste in William Butler Yeats. The Irish poet's vogue passed, but the man himself has recently been invoked for the purposes of a "modern" biography: *Yeats, The Man and the Masks* (Macmillan, 1948), a doctoral thesis by Richard Ellmann. Ellmann casts his subject in a Freudian mold—a form for which the life of Yeats furnishes ample data. The book can scarcely be said to be either brilliant or inviting, but it holds a certain interest for theosophists as a study in psychism.

Yeats, as a young man, contacted theosophical books, met H. P. Blavatsky, and became a member of her Esoteric Section. Despite this direct experience with the teacher of Theosophy, and contrary to her express injunction against experiments in psychism—the beginning of black magic—Yeats persisted in mediumistic experiments, and must have shown other inclinations to the left-hand path, for H. P. Blavatsky asked him to resign from the Esoteric Section. Doubtless Ellmann had no intention of arguing the case of psychism versus philosophy, but the evidence from Yeats's own writings, and the new material quoted from his diaries and private papers, is sobering testimony on the moral disaster of the uncontrolled psychic nature. While *The Man and the Masks* may intrigue readers who are interested in the shoddy details of a life of kamic indulgence, theosophical students will not be able to shut out the inner story of retrogression on the path of Soul. The lengths to which Yeats's rejection of philosophic discipline took him can be gauged by the extent of his dalliance with "goblins of mischief" (as he himself had once called them). In his later years he came to embrace Spiritualism, and worked on a "philosophy" revealed through the automatic writing of his wife! He felt himself forced to accept "God," and in one of his last essays records his belief that "profound philosophy must come from terror."

Yeats's idea of Theosophy must have been decidedly strange, for Ellmann states that "the Theosophists gave him support because they accepted and incorporated into their system ghosts and fair-

ies, and regarded dreams and symbols as supernatural manifestations"! Yeats was no philosopher, but being a poet he caught some half-truths, as in a definition of "fairies" he made soon after leaving the Society: "The fairies are the lesser spiritual moods of that universal mind, wherein every mood is a soul and every thought a body." Since "fairies," or elementals, are centers of force without mind or moral nature, they correspond more closely to universal *matter* than to universal Mind, and to say that man's thoughts direct and clothe elemental energies is not the same as saying that every thought *is a body.* Yeats seemed to be content with personal approximations of truth, while a propensity for "feeling" ideas instead of thinking them led him to mistake "thought-forms" for spiritual visions. The original statement from which Yeats drew his "definition" is contained in "A Master's Letter" (THEOSOPHY XXI, 491), and the whole passage is worth re-reading as a light on Yeats's own case and as a clue in respect to psychics generally. (The Letter appeared in A. P. Sinnett's *Occult World,* which Yeats read.) The Adept, after telling how thought "coalesces" with elementals, gives a hint of the ethics involved:

> And so man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offsprings of his fancies, desires, impulses, and passions; a current which re-acts upon any sensitive or nervous organization which comes in contact with it, in proportion to its dynamic intensity. The Buddhist calls this his "Skandha"; the Hindu gives it the name of "Karma." The adept involves these shapes consciously; other men throw them off unconsciously.

From this standpoint, the avowed psychic may be said to be one who chooses to *continue* evolving skandhas—or karma—"unconsciously," and who resists every karmic opportunity to pursue impersonal self-study. Ellmann observes that Yeats was "notoriously indiscreet about self-revelation (his wife would banteringly christen him 'William Tell')," and the indiscriminate outpouring of, seemingly, all that came into his head left Yeats with very few *assimilated* insights: he could neither take nor keep his own counsel.

Ellmann presents the theosophical case impartially, although he utterly fails to appreciate the issues involved. He tells us that Yeats, after being "greatly excited" over Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism* (and it will be remembered that Sinnett himself inclined to

seek phenomenal "proof" for the theosophical doctrines), was in attendance, with Charles Johnston, when the Psychical Research Society attempted to "report" on theosophical phenomena and H. P. Blavatsky's occult powers. Johnston, considering Hodgson's conclusions "scandalously unfair," became even more loyal to Theosophy and to H.P.B., and went ahead in 1886 to organize the Dublin Lodge. Yeats, however, sustained doubts as to H.P.B. until, moving to London shortly after Mme. Blavatsky arrived there in 1887, he went to see her, and the doubts were "immediately resolved." But it is clear that neither Theosophy nor H.P.Blavatsky had any deep or lasting influence on Yeats. Ellmann writes, for example, that Mme. Blavatsky—

> readily divined the young man's psychological difficulties. On one occasion he read a dull speech to the Theosophists who received it coldly. Madame Blavatsky called him over and said, ' "Give me the manuscript. Now go back and say your say about it." He did so, with the greatest success,' and was always grateful to her.

Yet a more important suggestion was by-passed:

> For about a year after her arrival in London [Ellmann relates] Madame Blavatsky discouraged her over-eager followers from plunging too deeply into Theosophical depths, warning them of the danger of black magic. Yeats disregarded her injunction and took Katharine Tynan to a spiritualist séance, where he was so upset by the supernatural phenomena that he lost control of himself and beat his head on the table; for his disobedience Madame Blavatsky severely scolded him on his next visit to her.

Yeats, connecting the "scolding" with disobedience rather than with moral danger, changed his line of direction not at all. He joined the Esoteric Section about Christmas, 1888, and before a year had passed he was proposing "a scheme for organization of occult research." This very question, Ellmann reports, had caused Yeats's friend, George Russell ("AE") to write "in great dismay to Madame Blavatsky, warning her of the danger of changing the goal of the Theosophical Society from union with the absolute to 'proving the phenomena of spiritualism, table-rapping, and the evocation of spooks'." H.P.B.'s reply, referring to her article, "Lodges of Magic," was that the Esoteric Section—

> *is not* a lodge of *magic,* but of *training.* For however often the true nature of the occult training has been stated and explained, few Western students seem to realize how searching and inexorable

> are the tests which a candidate must pass before *power* is entrusted to his hands. Esoteric philosophy, the occult hygiene of mind and body, the unlearning of false beliefs and the acquisition of true habits of thought, are more than sufficient for a student during his period of probation, and those who rashly pledge themselves in the expectation of acquiring forthwith "magic powers" will meet only with disappointment and certain failure. (*Lucifer,* December, 1888.)

Yeats, Ellmann reports casually, had "some skill at hypnotism," and "acted as 'mesmerist'." But "disappointment and certain failure" were not long in coming:

> Several experiments in fact took place; on one occasion the esotericists tried unsuccessfully to raise the ghost of a flower, on another to study the possibility of evoking certain kinds of dreams by sleeping with special symbols under their pillows. No miracles occurred, doubts arose in the minds of other members, and Yeats's committee seemed unlikely to further the Theosophical cause. His last public appearance in the organization was probably in August, 1890, when, with Annie Besant in the chair, he lectured on 'Theosophy and Modern Culture.' Though the lecture was apparently acceptable, the experiments had tried Madame Blavatsky's patience too far. Shortly afterwards her secretary, no doubt with her approval, asked him to resign. The poet regretfully complied.

For one period in his life, and in one cause, Yeats labored with a will and at the cost of much personal sacrifice. He put his energy and creative power behind the movement for an Irish renascence, and especially for an Irish theatre; he took a decisive part in establishing the group that became the Abbey Theatre. Thus Yeats, like all who have mingled even briefly in the current of Theosophy, showed his potential ability to serve his fellowmen. Although severing himself from work along theosophical lines and leaving undeveloped whatever knowledge and power a theosophical "education" might have brought into use in his nature, Yeats gave himself unselfishly to an ideal—the one clear light in his life, it would appear. Ellmann has submerged Yeats, his poems and plays, in a sea of wearying detail and long demonstrations of the obvious, but the real story is painfully clear. Yeats, it may be, lived a version of Wm. Q. Judge's strange tale about "The Wandering Eye"—that allegory of the eternal doubter which holds a meaning for every man.

MIND OF THE AGE

XIII: Negativism

IT is characteristic of students of Theosophy to feel that they are fortunate in possessing a source for a constantly *positive* or constructive attitude toward every human experience. In psychological terms, the karma of materialism, be it religious or pseudo-scientific, is the malaise of Negativism. So inevitably and yet so subtly do man's "negative" tendencies link themselves with our cultural patterns that a careful analysis of them is imperative if we are to attempt to understand the "Mind of the Age." Efforts to correct the dominance of negativism, in order to be fully effective, must be directed at all phases of pessimism and frustration, whether they reside in personal attitudes, unconscious habits, or political, social and educational institutions.

The most obvious reflections of negativism are to be found in the dominant psychic atmosphere of most modern writing, especially in those instances where the author seeks to introduce us to the mental life of a more or less "average" man—which is the only sort most writers choose to write about. In the works of such popular authors as John Dos Passos, Ernest Hemingway, Somerset Maugham and Frederic Wakeman we find nearly every page suffused with the "sophisticated" attitude that life is a frustrating story without a point. Aside from the romantic stereotypes of magazine serials and of the you-will-forget-this-novel-in-an-hour writing, the characters of modern literature uniformly fail to find any clear solution to the problem of internal dissatisfaction. Man is not supposed to be capable of transcending difficulties: he merely moves, largely by circumstantial impact, from situations that are relatively "happy" to those that are relatively unhappy or vice versa. The swing of the pendulum is now preponderantly in the former direction. The typical men and women of most modern novels become unhappier as the story proceeds, although they are momentarily allowed the respite of pleasant emotional stimulations.

Man's cynicism in respect to man has a long history. It is, of course, rooted in the concept of original sin or, as some recent return-to-religion essayists have it, to the concept of "personal un-

worthiness." Christian theology, we must remember, largely eliminated the dignity of the individual by implying that each man attains significance only as an instrument of a higher power. If one advanced in ecclesiastical ranks he became a wielder of power part of the time and an instrument of God's power at other times. But even in this instance he meant little of himself and by himself. Here we have one of the psychological roots of what has been clearly termed a "power civilization." Developments following the industrial revolution accentuated this trend. Just as the Church had its ruling class, so did the new industrial economy evolve its overlords. Political morality has therefore become a power morality, which means that in our social life we expect to substitute expediency for morality, and that it is only in our personal living that we occasionally concern ourselves with anything so petty as purely "moral" obligations.

The French revolution was a belated and abortive attempt to instill the philosophy of the dignity of the individual man into politics. The preceding formation of the American Republic had been more fortunate, since the Constitution of the United States still retains vestiges of the desire of Jefferson and Madison and Paine to bring an end to the separation between public and private morality. But by 1850 there had also occurred in the United States something that has recently been called "the second American revolution." Factional struggles for control of the many segments of the new large industries reproduced the immorality of pre-1776 political intrigue in a new area—the economic life of the nation. And as we moved towards monopolies and other tremendous concentrations of economic power, the influence of wealth upon both local and Federal government became pronounced—something publicly revealed with painful clarity by the Teapot Dome scandals and other episodes involving the unhealthy mingling of economic and political motivations.

Our general widespread cynicism in regard to all politics is nevertheless, for America, a retrogressive phenomenon. The idealism inspired by the spirit of the Founding Fathers was once a profound influence upon the development of our political and cultural traditions, even though after the middle of the century it lived only in the hearts of the few. Yet a certain idealism was associated

with the entrance of America into the first World War. Many infused into their participation in the "crusade" a reborn spirit of dedication to the principle of human freedom. But, caught somewhere in the discrepancy between noble ends and expedient means, the general mood turned from half-hearted protest to sneering acceptance of inevitable human chicanery. People felt they could no longer pretend there was any "law" in human affairs, save the law of self-preservation and self-aggrandizement.

In connection with war-participation, the history of our Christian churches is of considerable interest, for the churches mirrored the moral half-heartedness of millions who felt that they were "forced" to renounce the ethical credo of Jesus, the "Prince of Peace." If one endorses a war as a politician or as an industrialist, he may at least be allowed to retain that portion of self-respect which comes from consistency. But when a churchman accomplished the marvelous maneuver of having Jesus sanction, however indirectly, the slaughter of other human beings, the self-respect of consistency certainly cannot be maintained. Despite innumerable attempts at rationalization it is clear that Jesus was unequivocal on the matter of violence. It is reported that when Peter drew his sword to defend his Master Jesus said, "Put up the sword into the sheath; the cup which the father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This, in the opinion of a British essayist who attempted to deal honestly with the ethical dilemma of the Christian world during World War II, even though not a Pacifist, "is the true attitude of the follower of Jesus—to accept Pacifism and all its dire immediate consequences, not expecting an immediate miracle, but knowing the outcome of this struggle *sub specie aeternitatis.* Most of us are not equipped with the moral grandeur that makes this attitude possible. The Church—all the churches—if they are to save their souls and in the long run save the world, must declare without equivocation that they are on the side of the Pacifists."

> Otherwise, I am convinced [continues this writer], they will surely perish, and, even now, it is a question whether they are not too late, whether that organization called the Church is not, by its refusal to take the hard way, reduced to a bubble, a simulacrum, which, apparently rounded and substantial, is destined to perish at a breath. (*And Another Thing,* by Howard Spring, Harper & Brothers, 1946.)

Mr. Spring apparently recognizes that the core of the inspiration to be derived from the Prophet of Nazareth is his moral idealism. Jesus expected of others, as well as of himself, actions befitting the "Children of God." Insofar, then, as Christianity has devoted itself to the high moral expectancy of its Prophet, it had warded off the countering psychological influence of priestly emphasis on the doctrine of Original Sin. But whenever the Churches have been challenged to battle by concentrations of political power, they seem to have succumbed. During wartime the Church "cooperates" with the State.

Again, in the words of Mr. Spring:

> It is precisely in time of war that the Christian Churches awaken to a more than customary activity, associating themselves to the hilt with the national cause. It is interesting and significant that in Russia, where the divorce between Church and State was deeper than in any country in which Christianity had made its influence felt, the movement towards an understanding between the two took momentum in wartime. And, indeed, it is not difficult to understand that in a time when thousands must die and inflict death, the Church's sanction of the manner of their death and killing will be an asset of enormous value to the state.
>
> In Russia this sanction could hardly be more generously accorded. The Orthodox Church there has not only called upon Christians all over the world to join in the extermination of Fascism but also "condemns those who call for mercy in the name of forgiveness." This is reported in a message from the British United Press and Exchange, recorded in the newspapers of February 7th, 1945. It is worth noting these facts with some particularity, for, even amid the craziness of the modern world, this is the first time, so far as I know, that a large section of the Christian Church has clearly stigmatised mercy and forgiveness as properties to be condemned. We have moved a long way from the God whose property is always to show mercy, and from forgiveness unto seventy times seven. I am not at the moment asking whether this attitude is necessary to man in the condition to which he has reduced himself. I am simply pointing out that here we have a church officially promulgating a view which could not be more profoundly different from that which the founder of the church advanced as the only one that could bring man into accord with the will and purpose of his heavenly Father.

Our Churches have always said that we must not utilize brute force in the ordering of our personal lives, but the Church has never

found the courage and ability to actually attack these practices in international affairs or even in regard to political maneuverings. The real reason why the separation between Church and State has become so important for all those concerned with the rights of man is because we have had only one sort of State, a power State. If religion and State were to become united, in a cycle when the latter exercised the greatest control, we would have the termination of all opportunities for free choice and we would have to accept in our personal lives the same deification of power which has become commonplace in political terms.

During medieval times, the Church was comparatively far more powerful than it is today and the State was even weaker. The mechanisms of "spiritual" control have grown rusty, while totalitarianism has become *the* way of life for the modern nation. But if the spirit of the Inquisition can be so easily reincarnated in a political setting, its rebirth in the realm of religion and personal morality can also take place. Such a consummation would be complete nihilism from the standpoint of the evolution of soul; yet this trend is supported, however unconsciously, by every negative attitude of mind.

If our moral-expectancy for the human spirit is slight, we can have only one philosophy, that of hate and fear. In Theosophical terms, the commencement of all "negativism" is on the battleground within each man's psychic nature. None of us become sensual and greedy or brutal without having somehow rationalized ourselves into acceptance of man's weakness, or degradation. These things cannot be forced upon us by the State or by "economic overlords" or by the Church unless they are first accepted by individuals in their opinions of themselves and their fellows.

"The Blackness of the Shadow"

The Buddhist, the Hindoo, and the Mohammedan . . . have not actually constructed a theology based upon the inversion of the original principles of their religion. Their light has died away till but a faint flicker remains; but Christians have developed their social and political morality out of the very blackness of the shadow thrown by "The light of the World." —"A Turkish Effendi"

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—

HOW *can we be* SURE *there is no personal God?*

Well, one thing is certain: no matter how hard we seek, we shall not find that surety in the printed word, by whomsoever written. The conviction must be that of the self within, or it is worthless. If it springs from within, what better proof can we ask of the reality of the soul; and if the soul is a reality, where is there room, in this world or any other, for a personal God?

Even if we lack a real conviction, however, there are still some points we can consider. Which idea—that of soul or that of God—makes us act in the highest way possible, draws out of us the greatest aspiration and courage and dignity? If these qualities exist in a man who "believes" in God, we may be sure that the God he worships is not a *personal* god, or he could not evoke impersonal, unselfish qualities. Again, suppose those who believe in soul and do not believe in a personal deity should prove to be mistaken. Surely no God who deserves our respect and obedience could punish us for errors which he, in his omniscience and omnipotence, permitted us to make; and surely, if his existence *were* a reality, he would have the patience to see that all truth-seekers must eventually come to acknowledge it. In short, if it is fear of God which makes us unwilling to dismiss him from the universe, let us recognize this fear as unworthy of ourselves and an insult to true deity, and let us take the position that it is better to perish, even, denying such a fearsome creature than to live in the shadow of it.

If we say an unkind word to a person, does the result return to us necessarily from that same person?

There would seem to be no hard-and-fast answer for this. If we say an unkind word to a person, we reap an immediate result in our own character, quite regardless of any external reaction. Even if nobody else changed his attitude toward us one iota, our very unkindness would have changed ourselves to some degree, so that our relationship with every other human being would be correspondingly altered. We would be something less than we had been before, no matter by how little our inner stature was diminished.

Now if the person to whom we uttered the unkind remark was on the same imperfect level as ourselves, our action undoubtedly would rouse resentment in him, to which he might or might not give expression. If he said nothing, but *thought* much, perhaps, we are not to think that no reaction returned to us from him, for, as H.P.B. wrote, "Esoterically, thought is more responsible and punishable than act." It is possible, of course, that the person may, by an act of will, refuse to submit himself to the "elemental reaction" of giving unkindness for unkindness; and may, by a positive and constructive act, break the vicious cycle we had begun and lead us out of it. This is the kind of action the wise man strives to perform.

Do we always improve with every effort we make to bring about certain results?

Yes—though the improvement may not be exactly in accord with what we expect it should be or, even, in the direction of the results we are attempting to bring about. There is no meaning to the law of Karma if there is not an equal effect for every cause set in motion. Whenever we find cause to doubt this, we can be sure that we are looking for the result in the wrong place. We must admit that our judgment is often at fault; we either forget or refuse to take all the factors of any situation into account. Like a boy who shoots an arrow into the air, and then complains of trickery when he cannot find it where he expected it to land, we often upbraid the universe unjustly. We would find it simple to explain to the boy with the lost arrow that his hand may have failed to direct the shaft where his eye and mind were fixed; or that he did not in his search make allowance for the wind which shifted its course; or that he flattered himself that his arm was stronger than it really was, and that the arrow could be found much closer at hand.

This is not by way of discouragement, but simply to indicate how far we are from the true perception of cause and effect. Mr. Judge wrote in "Occultism: What Is It?" that the law of transmutation among forces "will baffle any one who has not the power to calculate the value of even the smallest tremble of a vibration, not only in itself but instantly upon its collision with another,

whether that other be similar to it or different." It will be some time before we shall be able to calculate to such a nicety, but the fact that there are beings who can do this with scientific certainty should reassure us of the justice and dependability of the universe.

If a criminal is allowed to go free without capital punishment, would the Law of Karma mete out justice according to his offence?

This is a good question, for it raises the problem of what alternative can be proposed if capital punishment is abolished. The Law of Karma of course will "mete out justice" to the criminal, but in the interests of humanity, all will agree, something must be done to keep the man from continuing on his criminal course in the meantime. If a man performs a wicked act, knowledge of the law of Karma does not prompt those around him to do nothing and content themselves with the thought that eventually he will reap the effect of that act; any more than they would see a man in the act of drowning and stand by inactive, saying that Karma would govern the question of whether or not he would be saved.

The first thing we need to remember, then, is that Karma works always through beings, of one order or another. It is not some abstraction which mysteriously produces the necessary effects, without recourse to material agents. This would be to say that the greatest office human beings can perform is to remain inactive completely, and allow the Law to act. We can see that this is ridiculous.

After we have satisfactorily determined this question, and seen that in the case of the criminal *some* action must be taken, we come to the problem of determining *what* action. And here we should perhaps refer to Mr. Judge's article, "Men Karmic Agents" (THEOSOPHY XIV, 412), for we will find that he warns us against the delusion that we are the administrators of the law. We have not the knowledge to pass judgment on, or punish, any man.

Through our present system of punishment, the spirit of society's vengeance communicates itself infallibly to every rebel, and incites in him further evil impulses. A knowledge of Karma should help us to find constructive methods of dealing with all kinds of ignorance, crime among them. Our purpose should be to so educate the wrong-doer that he will be able himself to mitigate, perhaps, some of the evil Karma following on his acts.

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

X

STUDENT.—Is there not some attitude of mind which one should in truth assume in order to understand the occult in Nature?

Sage.—Such attitude of mind must be attained as will enable one to look into the realities of things. The mind must escape from the mere formalities and conventions of life, even though outwardly one seems to obey all of them, and should be firmly established on the truth that Man is a copy of the Universe and has in himself a portion of the Supreme Being. To the extent this is realized will be the clearness of perception of truth. A realization of this leads inevitably to the conclusion that all other men and beings are united with us, and this removes the egotism which is the result of the notion of separateness. When the truth of Unity is understood, then distinction due to comparisons made like the Pharisee's, that one is better than his neighbor, disappear from the mind, leaving it more pure and free to act.

Student.—What would you point out as a principal foe to the mind's grasping of truth?

Sage.—The principal foe of a secondary nature is what was once called *phantasy;* that is, the reappearance of thoughts and images due to recollection or memory. Memory is an important power, but mind in itself is not memory. Mind is restless and wandering in its nature, and must be controlled. Its wandering disposition is necessary or stagnation would result. But it can be controlled and fixed upon an object or idea. Now as we are constantly looking at and hearing of new things, the natural restlessness of the mind becomes prominent when we set about pinning it down. The memory of many objects, things, subjects, duties, persons, circumstances, and affairs brings up before it the various pictures and thoughts belonging to them. After these the mind at once tries to go, and we find ourselves wandering from the point. It must hence follow that the

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NOTE.—These articles by Wm. Q. Judge were first printed in *The Path,* December, 1894, and January, 1895.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

storing of a multiplicity of useless and surely-recurring thoughts is an obstacle to the acquirement of truth. And this obstacle is the very one peculiar to our present style of life.

Student.—Can you mention some of the relations in which the sun stands to us and nature in respect to Occultism?

Sage.—It has many such, and all important. But I would draw your attention first to the greater and more comprehensive. The sun is the center of our solar system. The life-energies of that system come to it through the sun, which is a focus or reflector for the spot in space where the real center is. And not only comes mere life through that focus, but also much more that is spiritual in its essence. The sun should therefore not only be looked at with the eye but thought of by the mind. It represents to the world what the Higher Self is to the man. It is the soul-center of the world with its six companions, as the Higher Self is the center for the six principles of man. So it supplies to those six principles of the man many spiritual essences and powers. He should for that reason think of it and not confine himself to gazing at it. So far as it acts materially in light, heat, and gravity, it will go on of itself, but man as a free agent must think upon it in order to gain what benefit can come only from his voluntary action in thought.

Student.—Will you refer to some minor one?

Sage.—Well, we sit in the sun for heat and possible chemical effects. But if at the same time that we do this we also think on it as the sun in the sky and of its possible essential nature, we thereby draw from it some of its energy not otherwise touched. This can also be done on a dark day when clouds obscure the sky, and some of the benefit thus be obtained. Natural mystics, learned and ignorant, have discovered this for themselves here and there, and have often adopted the practice. But it depends, as you see, upon the mind.

Student.—Does the mind actually do anything when it takes up a thought and seeks for more light?

Sage.—It actually does. A thread, or a finger, or a long darting current flies out from the brain to seek for knowledge. It goes in all directions and touches all other minds it can reach so as to receive the information if possible. This is telepathically, so to say,

accomplished. There are no patents on true knowledge of philosophy nor copyrights in that realm. Personal rights of personal life are fully respected, save by potential black magicians who would take anyone's property. But general truth belongs to all, and when the unseen messenger from one mind arrives and touches the real mind of another, that other gives up to it what it may have of truth about general subjects. So the mind's finger or wire flies until it gets the thought or seed-thought from the other and makes it its own. But our modern competitive system and selfish desire for gain and fame is constantly building a wall around people's minds to everyone's detriment.

Student.—Do you mean that the action you describe is natural, usual, and universal, or only done by those who know how and are conscious of it?

Sage.—It is universal and [done] whether the person is aware or not of what is going on. Very few are able to perceive it in themselves, but that makes no difference. It is done always. When you sit down to earnestly think on a philosophical or ethical matter, for instance, your mind flies off, touching other minds, and from them you get varieties of thought. If you are not well-balanced and psychically purified, you will often get thoughts that are not correct. Such is your Karma and the Karma of the race. But if you are sincere and try to base yourself on right philosophy, your mind will naturally reject wrong notions. You can see in this how it is that systems of thought are made and kept going, even though foolish, incorrect, or pernicious.

Student.—What mental attitude and aspiration are the best safeguards in this, as likely to aid the mind in these searches to reject error and not let it fly into the brain?

Sage.—Unselfishness, Altruism in theory and practice, desire to do the will of the Higher Self which is the "Father in Heaven," devotion to the human race. Subsidiary to these are discipline, correct thinking, and good education.

Student.—Is the uneducated man, then, in a worse condition?

Sage.—Not necessarily so. The very learned are so immersed in one system that they reject nearly all thoughts not in accord with preconceived notions. The sincere ignorant one is often able to get

the truth but not able to express it. The ignorant masses generally hold in their minds the general truths of Nature, but are limited as to expression. And most of the best discoveries of scientific men have been obtained in this sub-conscious telepathic mode. Indeed, they often arrive in the learned brain from some obscure and so-called ignorant person, and then the scientific discoverer makes himself famous because of his power of expression and means for giving it out.

Student.—Does this bear at all upon the work of the Adepts of all good Lodges?

Sage.—It does. They have all the truths that could be desired, but at the same time are able to guard them from the seeking minds of those who are not yet ready to use them properly. But they often find the hour ripe and a scientific man ready, and then touch his cogitating mind with a picture of what he seeks. He then has a "flash" of thought in the line of his deliberations, as many of them have admitted. He gives it out to the world, becomes famous, and the world wiser. This is constantly done by the Adepts, but now and then they give out larger expositions of Nature's truths, as in the case of H.P.B. This is not at first generally accepted, as personal gain and fame are not advanced by any admission of benefit from the writings of another, but as it is done with a purpose, for the use of a succeeding century, it will do its work at the proper time.

Student.—How about the Adepts knowing what is going on in the world of thought, in the West, for instance?

Sage.—They have only to voluntarily and consciously connect their minds with those of the dominant thinkers of the day to at once discover what has been or is being worked out in thought and to review it all. This they constantly do, and as constantly incite to further elaborations or changes by throwing out the suggestion in the mental plane so that seeking and receptive minds may use it.

XI

Student.—Are there any rules, binding on all, in white magic or good occultism? I mean rules similar to the ten commandments of the Christians, or the rules for the protection of life, liberty and property recognized by human law.

Sage.—There are such rules of the most stringent character, the breaking of which is never wiped out save by expiation. Those rules are not made up by some brain or mind, but flow from the laws of nature, of mind, and of soul. Hence they are impossible of nullification. One may break them and seem to escape for a whole life or for more than a life; but the very breaking of them sets in motion at once other causes which begin to make effects, and most unerringly those effects at last react on the violator. Karma here acts as it does elsewhere, and becomes a Nemesis who, though sometimes slow, is fate itself in its certainty.

Student.—It is not, then, the case that when an occultist violates a rule some other adept or agent starts out like a detective or policeman and brings the culprit to justice at a bar or tribunal such as we sometimes read of in the imaginative works of mystical writers or novelists?

Sage.—No, there is no such pursuit. On the contrary, all the fellow-adepts or students are but too willing to aid the offender, not in escaping punishment, but in sincerely trying to set counteracting causes in motion for the good of all. For the sin of one reacts on the whole human family. If, however, the culprit does not wish to do the amount of counteracting good, he is merely left alone to the law of nature, which is in fact that of his own inner life from which there can be no escape. In Lytton's novel, *Zanoni,* you will notice the grave Master, Mejnour, trying to aid Zanoni, even at the time when the latter was falling slowly but surely into the meshes twisted by himself that ended in destruction. Mejnour knew the law and so did Zanoni. The latter was suffering from some former error which he had to work out; the former, if himself too stern and unkind, would later on come to the appropriate grief for such a mistake. But meanwhile he was bound to help his friend, as are all those who really believe in brotherhood.

Student.—What one of those rules in any way corresponds to "Thou shalt not steal"?

Sage.—That one which was long ago expressed by the ancient sage in the words, "Do not covet the wealth of any creature." This is better than "Thou shalt not steal," for you cannot steal unless you covet. If you steal for hunger you may be forgiven, but you coveted the food for a purpose, just as another covets merely for

the sake of possession. The wealth of others includes all their possessions, and does not mean mere money alone. Their ideas, their private thoughts, their mental forces, powers and faculties, their psychic powers—all, indeed, on all planes that they own or have. While they in that realm are willing to give it all away, it must not be coveted by another.

You have no right, therefore, to enter into the mind of another who has not given the permission and take from him what is not yours. You become a burglar on the mental and psychic plane when you break this rule. You are forbidden taking anything for personal gain, profit, advantage, or use. But you may take what is for general good, if you are far enough advanced and good enough to be able to extricate the personal element from it. This rule would, you can see, cut off all those who are well known to every observer, who want psychic powers for themselves and their own uses. If such persons had those powers of inner sight and hearing that they so much want, no power could prevent them from committing theft on the unseen planes wherever they met a nature that was not protected. And as most of us are very far from perfect, so far, indeed, that we must work for many lives yet, the Masters of Wisdom do not aid our defective natures in the getting of weapons that would cut our own hands. For the law acts implacably, and the breaches made would find their end and result in long after years. The Black Lodge, however, is very willing to let any poor, weak, or sinful mortal get such power, because that would swell the number of victims they so much require.

Student.—Is there any rule corresponding to "Thou shalt not bear false witness"?

Sage.—Yes; the one which requires you never to inject into the brain of another a false or untrue thought. As we can project our thoughts to another's mind, we must not throw untrue ones to another. It comes before him, and he, overcome by its strength perhaps, finds it echoing in him, and it is a false witness speaking falsely within, confusing and confounding the inner spectator who lives on thought.

Student.—How can one prevent the natural action of the mind when pictures of the private lives of others rise before one?

Sage.—That is difficult for the run of men. Hence the mass have not the power in general; it is kept back as much as possible. But when the trained soul looks about in the realm of soul it is also able to direct its sight, and when it finds rising up a picture of what it should not voluntarily take, it turns its face away. A warning comes with all such pictures which must be obeyed. This is not a rare rule or piece of information, for there are many natural clairvoyants who know it very well, though many of them do not think that others have the same knowledge.

Student.—What do you mean by a warning coming with the picture?

Sage.—In this realm the slightest thought becomes a voice or a picture. All thoughts make pictures. Every person has his private thoughts and desires. Around these he makes also a picture of his wish for privacy, and that to the clairvoyant becomes a voice or picture of warning which seems to say it must be let alone. With some it may assume the form of a person who says not to approach, with others it will be a voice, with still others a simple but certain knowledge that the matter is sacred. All these varieties depend on the psychological idiosyncrasies of the seer.

Student.—What kind of thought or knowledge is excepted from these rules?

Sage.—General, and philosophical, religious, and moral. That is to say, there is no law of copyright or patent which is purely human in invention and belongs to the competitive system. When a man thinks out truly a philosophical problem it is not his under the laws of nature; it belongs to all; he is not in this realm entitled to any glory, to any profit, to any private use in it. Hence the seer may take as much of it as he pleases, but must on his part not claim it or use it for himself. Similarly with other generally beneficial matters. They are for all. If a Spencer thinks out a long series of wise things good for all men, the seer can take them all. Indeed, but few thinkers do any original thinking. They pride themselves on doing so, but in fact their seeking minds go out all over the world of mind and take from those of slower movement what is good and true, and then make them their own, sometimes gaining glory, sometimes money, and in this age claiming all as theirs and profiting by it.

THE FULLY FREE

THE occult road—like life in general—is full of paradoxes. Not least of these is the insistence of Theosophy that thought and choice must be free, coupled with an equal insistence that if progress is to be made, a rigid rein must be maintained on our lower passions and desires.

The meaning of freedom here needs examination—from the worldly point of view. It is to be found in the fact that man contains principles and tendencies opposed to each other, where, naturally, opposite meanings of freedom exist. All too often freedom, in the mundane view, consists of the right to do "as we like" where the liking of the animal nature only is consulted. Since conflict and disregard of consequences are of the animal nature, while unity and harmony appertain to the universal, the road of the animal nature must at some point abut upon the impregnable wall of the communal reactions which protect other beings from destruction at its hands. There is no question as to how this road ends. The only question is as to how long the road may be.

Manifestly, the only endless road is that which is clear of opposition by any of the real interests of other beings; clear of those oppositions which finally pile up and bring a career to a stop, as deep snow piles before a poorly-designed plow until its tractor halts and is frozen in place. One who has no desire to obstruct or damage any other has automatically lost the faculty of being obstructed or damaged—once the karma of the past is spun out, and unless he *chooses* a path of trouble for the sake of others.

Moving where he will, he penetrates the natures and neighborhoods of others, darting on his chosen way unknown and unobstructed, without damage, as certain particles penetrate through ordinary matter. This is to be free—but for that freedom he has sacrificed not only passion and desire, but also the "reward"—if any—of being known to and esteemed by men of the world, other than by at most a very few.

Until the barrier is broken, he is held by "rigid duty" indeed; much sacrifice and perpetual labor. Without these he will not reach the barrier at all, much less break it. Obviously one who so

chains himself to duty cannot have what people as a rule call "freedom." The Way is very narrow at this point. But when the narrow place is passed he enters upon a freedom beyond all conception of men of matter. Is he not a free man entirely who wants to do everything that he sees to be necessary to do? Is it not worth it to reach this, that he has cast out of himself all that makes for un-freedom? He has freedom, but he does not have "freewill" in the usual sense because he can no longer make an *evil* choice.

Moreover, when the karmaless stage is reached, with all desire except for the sake of others abandoned, he does not have to take cognizance of time or place. *Wherever* he is, is the right place for him to be; whatever he sees fit to do, is the right thing for him to do. Those left behind and below can *command* him to their aid by making sacrifice: to him such a call is an eagerly-awaited invitation. His only sorrow is the sight of others, suffering so hopelessly for the time being in the toils of the monster "free-will"—free-will for the animal man. His own will is the will of the One—the secret spiritual will of all the Nirmanakayas—the will that is moved no longer by the indrawing and engulfing lusts of the lower man, but by compassion. He reaches that place and state where his being becomes the unending outpour of a golden flood of beneficence toward all beings, unquestioning of merits, status, creeds or race.

"The Proper Duty"

No man has a right to say that he can do nothing for others, on any pretext whatever. "By doing the proper duty in the proper place, a man may make the world his debtor," says an English writer. A cup of cold water given in time to a thirsty wayfarer is a nobler duty and more worth, than a dozen of dinners given away, out of season, to men who can afford to pay for them. No man who has not got it in him will ever become a *Theosophist;* but he may remain a member of our Society all the same. We have no rules by which we could force any man to become a practical Theosophist, if he does not desire to be one.

—H. P. Blavatsky

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Are Our Public Schools Doing Their Job?"

The general economic unrest throughout the United States, plus the shuddering fear which has crept into men's hearts following the use of atomic weapons, has resulted in a continuing challenge to educators to "do something about the situation." One of the latest attempts to awaken people is an article in the *Atlantic* for February, by Agnes E. Meyer, an address to the United Parents Associations of New York City. Mrs. Meyer has crusaded for a revitalized curriculum in our system of public education, and her war studies of 28 industrial centers were published in book form under the title: "Journey Through Chaos." Her contention in this article is that education has failed in what is a major problem—that is, the split that exists in our civilization between science and society, or in other words, between theory and application. She says:

> . . . The central problem of our nation is the stabilization of family and community life in an orderly society so that the individual will feel firm ground under his feet. Then and only then will the fears that breed hatred, rivalry, crime and fanaticism be assuaged by a profound sense of security. And the only nation-wide instrument for establishing the unity, order and security that are the moral imperatives of the day is undoubtedly our public school system. . . .
>
> Thus, the specific problem of the public school and its curriculum is to bridge this gap between our immense resources of knowledge and the social maladjustment that stares us in the face whether in our great cities or in our rural areas. . . . theories about education are useless unless they are taken over into experience. . . .

Certainly any reform in our society must begin with the family life, but it must be recognized also that a true sense of security will only be found in a realization that it must be a spiritual security rather than a material security that is to be sought.

The Role of the Teacher

Mrs. Meyer deplores the fact that the role of the public school teacher in our society has been minimized—that Boards of Education and school administrators have looked contemptuously upon them too long as mere employees although, actually, our schools will never be any better than our teachers.

> Our schools . . . are expected to inculcate American ideals, uphold our system of democracy and free enterprise, and teach more American history. Nothing but skepticism, aggression and delinquency is aroused in pupils if what they hear in the classroom has no relationship to what they see all around them. You cannot inculcate ideals in the school if they are brutally contradicted by the actual life of which the child is a part. . . . our traditional aspirations for freedom, justice and equality cannot be given a fortifying reality unless the teacher is free to point out that in spite of obvious failures in many directions, there are honest and valiant forces in our country that are laboring toward the rectification of the injustices created by our rapid industrial expansion. Then the child, instead of being discouraged and even outraged by our so-called ideals, will develop a determination to join the forces that are trying to shape our future society nearer to the heart's desire.

The "Released Time Program" Again

Among the many critical problems which are relegated to the schools is the present controversial one of religion. Mrs. Meyer feels that as the public school has a primary mission in stabilizing family life and giving all children a sense of brotherhood, "it should refuse categorically to become the battleground of sectarian religious beliefs."

> We cannot help feeling . . . that regardless of court decisions, the present conflicts between religious groups and between the Churches and the Supreme Court would never have threatened the nation's peace of mind had the firmly established independence of Church and school never been shattered. But having discovered through bitter experience why our Founding Fathers wrote the First Amendment, and suffering as we do from the animosities which the released-time program has inflicted upon our communities and our nation, how can anyone who is concerned about the welfare of the country still be for it?
>
> What we now seek in this nation and what we must find is a common ground of humanitarian values and principles valid for all people and applicable throughout the world.

And where can this be found except in a system of thought which is fundamental to all religions and all philosophies—in a creedless religion, an affirmative philosophy and an undogmatic science? Mrs. Meyer continues:

> We have no time to lose in vain recriminations. The fate of Western civilization rests in our hands. No nation has ever faced

> so heavy a responsibility. It has no parallel in history. If we are not to fail in this sacred mission, we must first of all establish peace and good will here at home. That is the prime reason why we must make our public schools what they once were and should always remain: the strongest agency we possess for mutual love, tolerance, and forgiveness between all races, classes, and creeds. This cannot come about until the released-time programs, of whatever nature, are abolished. Then, and only then, can we re-establish for our boys and girls that all-embracing spiritual unity which has always been the saving grace of democracy, that profound sense of brotherhood which nourished, fortified, and enriched our own childhood, and which will always be the real defense of this country against totalitarianism and all other forces that are hostile to human liberty.

No Royal Road

A great deal has been said in the past, and much done, to educate the physically handicapped, the mentally retarded, and the average child. Mrs. Meyer points out that while of course we must help the weak, we also owe a duty to the strong—that it is definitely demoralizing for those children who have worked hard for learning to see those who have not so worked, promoted along with them. It debases our learning to the lowest common denominator. If our children felt that they could get ahead in school as fast as their abilities expanded, they would be inspired with a renewed love of hard work. Schools are accused, and justly in many cases, of extreme laxness because they do not demand enough effort and application from the students, which results in an overprotected and coddled atmosphere. An injunction to foster "will-born" men and women—a truly theosophical aim—is given by Mrs. Meyer:

> It is high time the public schools deliberately counteracted this debilitating trend in our national psychology. Our children must be made to understand that just as there is no *royal* road, so there is no *democratic* road to learning. They must be made to feel the joy of work, of ambition, of continuous application and self-development and learn that this joy can be earned only by the sweat of their brows.

Music As Medicine

"Sing Me to Sleep, Doctor" is the title of an article (*Satevepost*, Jan. 29) by Dr. Steven M. Spencer, in which he writes of the way music is now being used as an anesthesia to soften the emotional

shock of operations, and to assure a smoother and more rapid convalescence. The music is offered either as a prelude to unconsciousness (just before a general anesthetic) or as a distraction to keep the patient's mind off his incision while he is under a spinal anesthetic, the kind that leaves him numb but awake. It appears to be so effective a distraction that frequently, as the operation is about half over, a patient will ask: "When are they going to start?"

"The Psychological Aspect"

The therapy of music has long been known, but this seems to be a widespread attempt to make use of it, an attempt endorsed by the American Medical Association and fostered by substantial money grants from the Office of Naval Research. The most elaborate program is that of the University of Chicago's Billings Hospital, but other hospitals also are taking up the idea.

Dr. Vincent J. Collins, Anesthesiologist at a New York hospital, takes his colleagues to task for having neglected this phase of their work. "The psychological aspect has been forgotten in our scientific approach to anesthesia." He says further:

> Many of us have been dealing with machines and not patients. In particular we are to be criticized for our handling of children. . . . It is important to remember that hearing is the last of the senses to be blotted out by the anesthetic. It is abnormally active just as the patient "goes under," and sounds then seem magnified or distorted. . . ."

As sounds are magnified, it would certainly seem extremely important that the type of sound be harmonious if the patient is not to have some violent reaction on his nervous system. The few statistics which have been kept so far show that the *least* popular type selected by patients is the "classical." As it would appear that sounds generated on the physical plane would have their corresponding reactions on higher planes, one wonders what kind of a medley would result from jazz and "boogie-woogie" selections?

"East Indian Music"

In this connection, excerpts from a short article of the above title by Robert Crosbie would seem worth quoting. He was asked the question: "Why is East Indian Music of a higher, purer nature than the music of other countries?" His answer in part is:

> I think that the reason is to be found in the fact that Religion itself had its origin in the East, so far as this humanity is concerned, and that it has remained as originally recorded by the ancient sages. . . . When we realize that the fundamental teachings of the East were based upon knowledge gained by highly evolved beings, and that this great knowledge necessarily points the way to a higher and purer life, it follows that specific applications of this knowledge would be made in every department of human expression. Both speech and music are based upon feeling; all beings "feel," but there is a wide difference in the ideas upon which feeling is based. A Religion which teaches original sin, Separateness and irresponsibility, would inevitably bring about in the minds of its adherents, correspondential feelings and expressions; whereas in a Religion which teaches Non-separateness, unselfishness and service, speech, music and all expressions of life would flow from the feeling which those qualities engender. It is the ideas upon which the faith of beings is fixed, that makes all the differences in human expressions.
>
> While the West is beginning to recognize in ancient East Indian music ennobling qualities, the full beauty and meaning of it will not be grasped until the West first recognizes, adopts, and applies the principles of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion. . . . The higher the ideals, the higher and purer will be thought, speech, actions and expressions of every kind. (THEOSOPHY X, 138.)

It is possible that a consideration of the expressions of our "modern" age, with special reference to the type of music most prevalent, would give thoughtful students a hint as to our place in racial evolution.

APPRECIATION TO THE ANCIENTS

Dr. Spencer recognizes that the therapeutic use of music is not new, and gives credit thus:

> It is as old as Egypt and the incantations of the Pharoah's physicians . . . and Greeks believed the soft, melodious notes of the flute would relieve sciatica and almost anything else. Primitive tribes in every part of the world have leaned on the curative value of chants and songs. Their medicine men emphasized the magic or supernatural power of their vocal offerings, but it was doubtless the psychological impact of the music upon the patients which produced the favorable effects. . . .

This is merely a shortened re-statement of what Madame Blavatsky wrote in her earliest book, *Isis Unveiled:*

> From the remotest ages the philosophers have maintained the singular power of music over certain diseases, especially of the nervous class. Kircher recommends it, having experienced its good effects in himself, and he gives an elaborate description of the instrument he employed. It was a harmonica composed of five tumblers of a very thin glass, placed in a row. In two of them were two different varieties of wine; in the third, brandy; in the fourth, oil; in the fifth, water. He extracted five melodious sounds from them in the usual way, by merely rubbing his finger on the edges of the tumblers. The sound has an attractive property; it draws out disease, which streams out to encounter the musical wave, and the two, blending together, disappear in space. Asclepiades employed music for the same purpose, some twenty centuries ago; he blew a trumpet to cure sciatica, and its prolonged sound making the fibres of the nerves to palpitate, the pain invariably subsided. Democritus in like manner affirmed that many diseases could be cured by the melodious sounds of a flute. Mesmer used this very harmonica described by Kircher for his magnetic cures. The celebrated Scotchman, Maxwell, offered to prove to various medical faculties that with certain magnetic means at his disposal, he would cure any of the diseases abandoned by them as incurable; such as epilepsy, impotence, insanity, lameness, dropsy, and the most obstinate fevers. (I, 215.)

The "gentle current" which the Seeress of Prevorst found so valuable is here evident, and its use in medicine—as magnetic or electrical vibration—was long ago anticipated. As Mr. Judge remarked in passing (see *The Path,* Feb. 1888), "it might be well to construct a machine after the pattern given by her."

Without Fear

At the same time that one set of doctors is congratulating medical science on the great advance in painless childbirth by the improvement of anesthetics (where only 1 percent used anesthetics some 20 years ago, 60 percent of women in labor now employ them), another set of physicians is busy tabulating the rewarding figures of women who had a painless childbirth without anesthetics—and with a "new" kind of education.

Readers of Lookout will remember a discussion of Dr. Grantly Dick Read's *Childbirth Without Fear* (Theosophy for February, 1948). Dr. Read's thesis is, generally, the effect of fear and tension in producing the most fearful pain in uterine contractions, and the equally powerful effect of relaxation in mind and body. While

the reception of natural treatments has been notoriously slow in other fields of medicine, Dr. Read's work (begun in England some thirty years ago) seems to have evoked an amazing popular interest. *Collier's* has devoted two articles to the subject, the last appearing in the Nov. 13th issue. (See also March *Reader's Digest.*) As we go to press, the L. A. *Times* (April 14) reports that Los Angeles will be the first city to have a "prenatal psychological clinic" for prospective parents, with "painless childbirth" as a goal.

So Little Time!

The *Collier's* article is a summary of the work of two physicians of the Yale University School of Medicine, Drs. Herbert Thoms and Frederick W. Goodrich, Jr., who set out to investigate the Read method of "natural childbirth" in a two-year project carried on at the Grace New Haven Hospital in Connecticut. The emphasis was placed throughout the term on elimination of the frightening concepts evoked by the words "pain," and "labor," and the emotionally-uncharged word "contractions" was substituted. In a few informal talks, patients were taught exercises in relaxation. Gretta Palmer, author of the *Collier's* article, remarks:

> Some doctors who were impressed by the Read method have thought that only private patients could be given the time-consuming prenatal attention necessary to root out inherent fears. The New Haven experiment has shown that this is not true: A few brief talks by the doctor given to 20 or 30 women at a time seem enough to banish ignorance and fear from most of the patients' minds.

The Business of Evolution

Time (Jan. 31) gives the statistical results of the experiment:

> Natural childbirth, said Dr. Goodrich, is not completely painless; only about 2% of the 400 patients reported no pain at all. The majority felt some pain, which they were "quite willing to tolerate in view of the exaltation accompanying conscious delivery." Some drugs were used, too. Only 35% had their babies without any anesthesia or painkilling drugs; about half the rest had small doses of Demerol or whiffs of nitrous oxide (dentistry's "laughing gas"). The mothers were told to ask for drugs if they felt they needed them. Only 12% were not fully conscious.

The theosophist finds something hopeful in this trend away from anesthetized unconsciousness. Fearlessness in facing possible pain

in a conscious state is far different from the extreme perversion of the pain-embracing martyr. Neither pain, nor the bearing of it, is important unless manasic perception and psychic equilibrium are gained and maintained by the experience. Dr. Read's work is an illustration in the field of obstetrics of how Kama can be "thrown back into its proper sphere" and instead of subjugating the being, can be made to serve the controlling mind. Conquering at any level the impulses of the psychic nature—the impulses of fear and flight—is the business of man's evolution.

"Academic Freedom Cuts Both Ways"

The University of Washington has broken into the news often in the past months with reports and controversy on the dismissal of three professors—two for being Communists and one for refusing to commit himself under investigation. While the whole mushrooming practice of "investigating" in government and educational circles is fit subject for serious questioning, the president of the university of Washington, Raymond Allen, has made one valid point in defending his action. Aware that many have used the tradition of academic freedom as a shield for their propagandizing activities, he defines it as *requiring* of the professor freedom from undue political influence, as well as guaranteeing him freedom from undue restraint by the university or college employing him. As quoted in *Time,* Feb. 7, Pres. Allen remarks:

> "Academic freedom consists of something more than merely an absence of restraints placed upon the teacher by the institution that employs him. It demands as well an absence of restraints placed upon him by his political affiliations, by dogmas that may stand in the way of free search for truth, or by rigid adherence to a party line. . . ."

"No Passive Members"

In similar vein is an article by New York University's Sidney Hook, in the New York *Times Magazine* (Feb. 27). Discussing the implications of Pres. Allen's re-definition of academic freedom, Dr. Hook places himself in agreement: "Anyone is free to join or leave the Communist party: but once he joins and remains a member, he is not a free mind." It is important to remember, he adds, that "there are no 'sleepers' or passive members of the Communist party."

Describing the ever-shifting party line which makes scientific consistency bow to political expediency, he continues:

> Whether with respect to specific issues Communist teachers have been right or wrong in these kaleidoscopic changes is not the relevant question. What is relevant is that their conclusions are not reached by free inquiry into the evidence. To stay in the Communist party, they must believe and teach what the party line decrees. If anyone doubts this we have the objective evidence provided by Granville Hicks in his public letter of resignation from the Communist party. Hicks resigned because he was refused even the right *to suspend judgment* on the Nazi-Stalin pact. "If the party," he writes, "had left any room for doubt, I could go along with it. * * * But they made it clear that if I eventually found it impossible to defend the pact, and defend it in their terms, there was nothing for me to do but resign." (*New Republic*, Oct. 4, 1939.)

"A POSITION OF TRUST"

Dr. Hook declares that his stand is not based on an opinion as to the rightness or wrongness of Communist beliefs, but simply and solely on the blind allegiance demanded for those beliefs:

> If in the honest exercise of his academic freedom an individual reaches views which bring down about his head charges of "Communist," "Fascist" or what not, the academic community is duty bound to protect him irrespective of the truth of the charges. And since these words are often epithets of disparagement rather than of precise description, there is all the more reason why the university must stand firm. It places its faith in the loyalty of its teachers to the ethics and logic of scientific inquiry. The heresies of yesterday are often the orthodoxies of today. In the interests of winning new truths, it is better to err on the side of toleration than of proscription.

This is a position with which the theosophical philosophy is in harmony: the important truth for any man is the truth which he has sought and proven for himself, and no matter how objectively true any idea may be, if it is accepted blindly or forced upon his mind, that idea does not represent truth, but rather the most grievous falsehood. This is a position completely independent of the dogmatism in question, whether it be Communist or Catholic. We must someday be more interested in a man's *thinking* about ideas than in the ideas themselves—truth belongs to no one, but truth-seeking belongs to every soul.

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The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

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"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

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